

## City of Berkeley



Planning Commission  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Civic Center Building  
2180 Milvia Street  
Berkeley, California 94704

(415) 644-6534  
TTY (415) 644-6915

To: Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

From: Planning Commission

Subject: FRAMEWORK FOR THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

The following recommendations are presented to the Berkeley City Council for consideration at their July 25 meeting, at which the Council has indicated its intent to give direction to the ROMA consultants for preparation of the Preferred Alternative for the Berkeley Waterfront Plan. These recommendations are based on discussions of the Technical Evaluation Report and the Preferred Alternative held at four Planning Commission meetings, including July 24, to which the other Commissions involved in the Waterfront Plan were invited: Waterfront, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Civic Arts, and Project Area Committee. This report reflects the recommendations from those commissions, summarized in the attachments. They respond to the four questions in the Framework for the Preferred Alternative, Chapter III of the Technical Evaluation Report prepared by the ROMA consultants: What kind of development should it be? Where should development take place? What should it look like? How much development should take place?

What Kind Of Development Should It Be?

The Berkeley Waterfront should become part of a continuous East Bay shoreline open space system. A limited amount of private development should take place, to make the Waterfront part of a vibrant urban community, attractive to and usable by people.

The following uses listed 1 through 4 are in order of priority; those following do not reflect an agreed-upon preference. In all types of development a top priority consideration must be to meet the job needs of unemployed and under-employed Berkeley residents, in both construction and permanent jobs.

1. Recreation and Open Space

These are top priority uses for the Waterfront, they should encompass a range of recreational and ecological uses, including:

- a. A continuous shoreline park
- b. Wildlife habitat





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- c. Recreational uses for people of different ages,
- d. Water recreational uses, including protection of shoreline areas used for fishing from the impact of motor boats
- e. As suggested by the Parks and Recreation Commission 25 acres of playing fields could be provided
- f. Possible active recreation facilities that should be explored further include an amusement park, active play-learning center, play structures for children and adults such as giant slides and doughnut swings and an indoor recreation facility
- g. Berkeley Beach is a high priority, whether in the short or long term. It should not be precluded by short-term development or other uses
- h. An amphitheater for public presentations
- i. A location for the visual and performing arts, as suggested by the Civic Arts Commission

### 2.A Centerpiece, Visionary Public Use: A Multi-Cultural Center

The Waterfront is a uniquely appropriate location for a cultural center that reflects the diversity of Berkeley's people and the special character of the site as a gateway to and from the Pacific Ocean. A multi-cultural center could provide a setting for presentations and displays of arts, crafts, and the living environments of peoples from all nations and cultures joined by the Pacific Ocean, in an attractive setting conducive to both recreation and learning. Living exhibits showing the ecology of the ocean itself could be included. Dances, plays, poetry, food, and music presentations would attract visitors from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and provide training and employment for Berkeley residents. Offices for organizations devoted to international peace could be included.

### 3. Recreational and Commercial

Small-scale retail uses are desirable that offer recreational products and services, such as windsurfing and sailing equipment and lessons, bicycle and boat rentals, fishing supplies, and chandleries. A variety of restaurants is desired, especially inexpensive, family-oriented ones. These activities should meet the needs of people of all ages, income levels, and ethnic backgrounds. Implementation tools should be explored to meet these goals. Recreational commercial uses can help meet the targeted job goals of the City, as well as creating an interesting environment. The question of whether a major recreational use such as a Tivoli Gardens is desirable was not resolved. However, commercial theme parks and specialty commercial centers such as Pier 39 are not considered appropriate or desirable. Other kinds of small-scale retail and commercial uses especially water-related, which serve visitors to the Waterfront should be encouraged. They should also serve people of all ages, income levels, and ethnic backgrounds. The question of whether night-time uses such as movie theaters and other evening gathering places is appropriate was not resolved.





#### 4. Conference Center

The Waterfront should include a mix of traditional conference facilities for University and business-sponsored events, as well as space for less formal gatherings and for community groups which cannot afford most conference/lodging facilities. The center should include lodgings which serve a variety of income and age groups. The consultants should explore how the center would affect other similar facilities downtown and elsewhere in Berkeley. The Commission's image is that the center should consist of small, separate structures rather than a single large structure.

#### 5. Lodgings and Accommodations

Lodgings should orient outward and invite the public, rather than orienting inward. They should accommodate a range of income and age groups, including community uses. A hostel which provides low-cost accommodations for travelers and young people is highly favored. A lower-cost hotel that accommodates people visiting the Waterfront for conferences and recreational activities, that serves the Berkeley community, and that takes advantage of the unique Waterfront environment is preferable.

The traditional urban hotel, with intensively used space primarily for business people, is not favored.

#### 6. Housing

Commissioners had strong opinions on both sides of the questions of whether or not housing on the Waterfront is desirable, and there is no consensus on this issue.

Among the arguments for housing are that it helps meet the City's need for more units, assures 24-hour use of the Waterfront, creates a sense of neighborhood and community, provides linkage from the rest of the City to the Waterfront, and would enhance the quality of the Waterfront as a vibrant urban community. Arguments against including housing include a lower economic return to the City and the developer, the potential for privatizing the Waterfront and intruding on potential public uses, the fact a socially viable community (600 units) may be too large given other goals and community-oriented uses envisioned, possible hazards due to bay fill and risk of liquefaction, difficulty of obtaining low and moderate-income units, and the need to restructure the freeway to provide access.

If residential use is to be considered in the Preferred Alternative, the following questions should be addressed:

- a. How money toward moderate income units could be provided? How could a mixed-income development be subsidized? What guarantees would assure retention at below market rate prices?
- b. How many units are required to create a viable residential community. How much squarefootage and land area would be needed?

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed analysis of the data collected during the experiment. The data was collected over a period of six months, from January to June 2023. The experiment was designed to investigate the effects of various factors on the system's performance. The results of the experiment are presented in the following sections.

## 2. Methodology

The methodology used in this experiment was a combination of theoretical analysis and empirical testing. The theoretical analysis was based on the principles of system dynamics, which provide a framework for understanding the behavior of complex systems. The empirical testing was conducted using a series of experiments that varied the input parameters of the system. The results of the experiments were compared with the theoretical predictions to validate the model.

The data was collected using a series of sensors that measured the system's output. The data was then processed using a series of algorithms that calculated the system's performance metrics. The results of the processing are presented in the following sections.

## 3. Results

The results of the experiment show that the system's performance is highly sensitive to the input parameters. The performance metrics, such as the system's output and the system's stability, are significantly affected by the input parameters. The results of the experiment are presented in the following sections.

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- c. Are there environmental hazards on the site that are especially dangerous for residential use?
- d. How could the design of a residential community relate it to the rest of Berkeley, visually and physically? How could the design assure full public access to the water's edge?

### 7. Offices

Offices, other than those needed for management of the preferred uses described above, are not appropriate for the Waterfront. This use has fewer entry-level jobs and great negative social and economic impacts than these other activities.

### 8. Other Uses

Conventional light or heavy industry is not appropriate. However, a Produce Center as well as agricultural and aquaculture should be explored. The Produce Center should be interesting in appearance, attract rather than exclude the public, include retail as well as wholesale outlets, and benefit local restaurants and food producers. The Center could include space for associated offices, public exhibits, and educational programs. The Preferred Alternative should indicate what public costs would be incurred by a Produce Center and how these costs could be covered.

#### Where Should Development Take Place?

As an overall guide, at least 65 percent of the Waterfront should be permanently preserved as open space. The city should attempt to achieve a continuous band of open space 250 feet in width along the shoreline.

#### 1. North Basin Strip

This is a top priority area for development. Buildings should be used to buffer the shoreline open space from the freeway and the noise it generates. However, views from the freeway should not be blocked, since the site provides the first view of the Bay for the southbound motorist. Possible uses include a produce market, a conventional urban hotel, housing with mixed uses, offices if they are to be built anywhere on the Waterfront, other uses which are more private than public, and uses which are heavy traffic generators.

#### 2. Meadow

The meadow has top priority for open space and active recreational uses.

#### 3. East Meadow

This area should provide a sensitive visual transition between development to the northeast and the open space of the Meadow. The most easterly 5 to 7 acres could be considered for development, and playing fields should be considered for the rest. Development should not be allowed to extend to the west beyond the Frontage Road and University Avenue connection. Any development should be publicly oriented.

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## 2. Introduction

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## 3. Objectives

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## 6. References

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## 7. Appendix

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4. Marina Edge

The Marina Edge is not a priority for development now, but the western portion should be considered for future use as small scale commercial development if it is sited in such a way as to maintain a clear access and connectedness between the open space of the Central Meadow and the North Waterfront Park.

5. Brickyard

The prime use here should be open space. The Brickyard should be a strong focal point for access to the area and should preserve the view from the City and the Waterfront to San Francisco. A beach, nature study center, enhanced natural habitat, and landscaped park are recommended uses.

6. South of the Brickyard

This narrow band between the freeway and the water, extending south to Emeryville, could not accommodate any development other than extension of a continuous shoreline path and possible future beach improvements.

7. Horsebarn Acre

The most easterly third of the area should be considered for development. The western two-thirds should be open space with connections to Fleming Point in Albany.

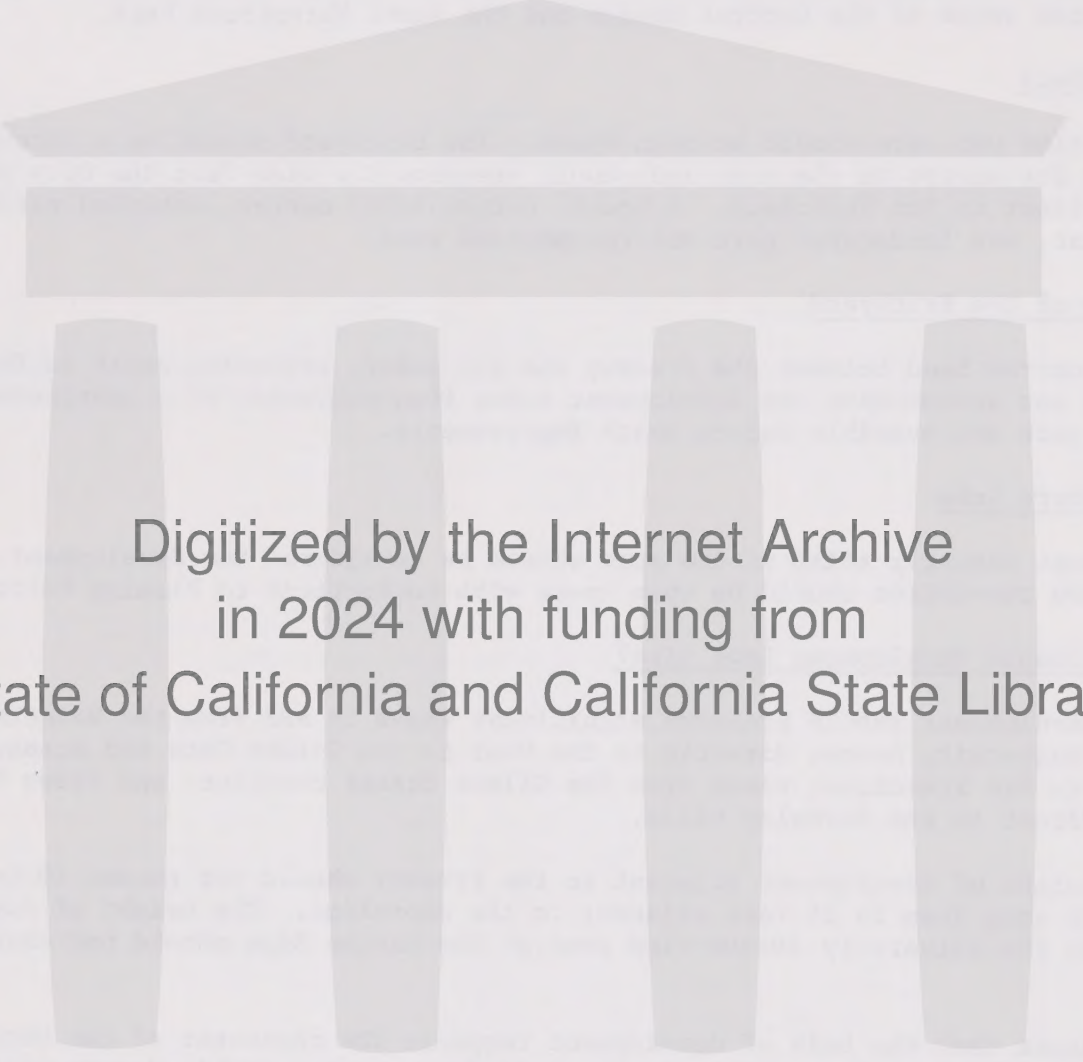
What Should Development Look Like?

All development should preserve significant views to and from the Waterfront: views from University Avenue directly to the West to the Golden Gate and across the Brickyard to San Francisco; views from the Gilman Street corridor; and views from the Waterfront to the Berkeley hills.

The height of development adjacent to the freeway should not exceed 45 feet, and should step down to 25 feet adjacent to the shoreline. The height of development within the University Avenue view cone at the Marina Edge should not exceed 25 feet.

To assure that the bulk of development respects the character of the Waterfront and adjacent Berkeley neighborhoods, building coverage within development parcels should not exceed 50 percent of the parcel; the Floor Area Ratio within development parcels should not exceed .5 (ratio of building area to site area).

Active ground level uses should be encouraged, especially next to public access and open space areas. Parking areas should be set back from public spaces. All roadways and parking areas should be generously landscaped and lighted to assure safety without visual intrusion into adjacent areas. Uses should connect to and be compatible with uses in nearby areas of Albany and Emeryville.



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How Much Development Should Take Place?

A total of 500,000 square feet of development should be used as a working figure in the Preferred Alternative, to assure a reasonable economic return for the property owner, and to attain the basic benefits desired by the City.

The actual amount of development will depend upon the following factors, among others, which should be explored in the Preferred Alternative:

1. The feasibility of residential use, as described above, and the amount of square footage that would be required.
2. The potential for achieving desired public benefits, such as below market rate housing and public uses.
3. The potential for reducing site improvement costs to the developer, and thus increasing the opportunities for either reduced development or increased public benefits. Possibilities for external subsidies should be explored.
4. The assumption should be made that Albany and Emeryville will use a major portion of the total capacity at the Gilman and Ashby interchanges. The preferred alternative should attempt to retain a level of traffic service of at least "D" on nearby City streets in Berkeley in the light of development in adjacent cities.
5. The assumption should also be made that the University Avenue overpass will remain two lanes westbound, as called for in CalTrans' plans for reconstruction of the overpass.
6. Major pedestrian and bicycle crossings should be planned at the University Avenue/Aquatic Park area and farther north between Virginia and Gilman, including the possibility of those two locations. They should be located in such a way as to connect with the open space areas of the Waterfront.
7. The degree to which development on the Waterfront would have adverse effects on the Downtown, South Berkeley, and West Berkeley, which are target areas for revitalization.

PLANNING PROCESS

After the Draft Preferred Alternative is made available to the public in September, the remainder of the planning process should conform to the guidelines set out by the Waterfront Liaison Committee, Waterfront Commission, and Planning Commission in April. Those guidelines included adequate time for public review (10 days to 2 weeks), public workshops and public hearings clearly identified as such, adequate time for Boards and Commissions to make their recommendations to Council and for Council to review those recommendations (3 weeks suggested.) Given the importance of the Draft Preferred Alternative, there should be a broader participation in public workshops, with professional facilitators, followed by a joint commission workshop, in addition to the Public Hearing process. Staff should be directed

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to recommend how these workshops could be funded. The Planning Calendar should be made public well in advance of the events listed; 30 days has been suggested.

Wendy Gleason for  
Wendy Gleason, Chairperson

Attachments

1. Memo from Parks and Recreation Commission
2. Memo from Transportation Commission
3. Review from Waterfront Commission
4. Recommendations from Civic Arts Commission
5. Review from Project Area Committee

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